

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 40 (Cancelled).

41. (Previously Presented) An interrogation apparatus for communicating with at least one transponder, comprising:

at least one antenna portion operable to transmit an interrogation signal to the transponder and to receive a data signal from the transponder;

a processing portion operably interconnected to said at least one antenna portion operable to receive the data signal and to determine the presence or absence of body characteristic data within the data signal, and when the presence of body characteristic information is detected, decode the data signal to obtain at least said body characteristic information; and

an output portion operable to output, when the presence of body characteristic information is detected, said body characteristic information;

wherein said processing portion is operable to receive said data signal, demodulate said data signal into an information signal, and determine the contents of the information signal, wherein said processing portion is operable to identify an indicator within said information signal, and determine the presence of body characteristic information based on the indicator, and wherein said information signal contains a plurality of indicators, and said processing portion is operable to determine the presence of body characteristic information based on any detected differences between one or more of the plurality of indicators.

42. (Previously Presented) The interrogation apparatus of claim 41, wherein said processing portion is operable to obtain and store a predetermined number of indicators and other information from said information signal, and determine the presence or absence of body characteristic information.

43-82 (Cancelled).

83. (Previously Presented) A method for interrogating a transponder, comprising:
transmitting an interrogation signal;
detecting a response signal generated from the transponder in response to said interrogation signal;
determining a format of said response signal;
decoding identification information encoded within said response signal;
determining if body characteristic data is included in said response signal,
comprising;
storing at least one data telegram from said response signal; and
determining the presence of body characteristic information based on information within said data telegram, wherein said determining the presence of body characteristic information step includes:
comparing headers from a plurality of data telegrams; and
determining the presence or absence of body characteristic information within said telegrams based on differences detected between said headers;
and
when body characteristic data is included in said response signal,
decoding said characteristic data.

84-97 (Cancelled).

98. (Previously Presented) An interrogation apparatus for communicating with a transponder, comprising:

at least one antenna operable to transmit an interrogation signal to the transponder and to receive a data signal from the transponder;

a processing portion operably interconnected to said at least one antenna operable to receive the data signal and to decode the data signal to obtain identification information contained therein, and when the data signal includes an indicator, to further decode the data signal to obtain body characteristic information contained therein, wherein said processing portion is operable to detect at least two different formats of data within said data signal and is operable to detect the presence or absence of body characteristic information within each format of data; and

an output portion operable to output said identification information and, when said indicator is detected, output said body characteristic information.

99. (Previously Presented) The interrogation apparatus of Claim 98, wherein said data formats conform to an existing standard for transmission of identification information from a transponder to an interrogator.

100. (Previously Presented) The interrogation apparatus of Claim 98, wherein said data formats conform to ISO standard 11785.

101. (Previously Presented) The interrogation apparatus of Claim 100, wherein said data format is FDXA.

102. (Previously Presented) The interrogation apparatus of Claim 100, wherein said data format is FDXB.